

with the request that they serve on such committee: J. C. Arthur, L. H. Bailey, N. L. Britton, D. H. Campbell, J. M. Coulter, B. T. Galloway, Conway MacMillan, B. L. Robinson, William Trelease, L. M. Underwood, George Vasey.

May I not ask a hearty support be given to the committee by every botanist, to the end that the congress may be every way successful.—
CHARLES E. BESSEY, *Chairman Section G (Botany), A. A. A. S.*

Lesquereux's Flora of the Dakota Group: A reply.

In the October number of the GAZETTE I find a review of Lesquereux's *Flora of the Dakota Group*, which I seem to have been so unfortunate in editing. As this review is so evidently the vehicle of a personal attack, you will, I trust, grant me space for a few words of editorial explanation. My reviewer says: "The best method of editing a posthumous work is, undoubtedly, to carry it out in the same spirit in which it was written, taking all facts into consideration." Had he taken the trouble to read the editor's preface he would have seen that this was precisely what has been done. The only changes made in the MS. as submitted by Lesquereux, except such slight verbal ones as were necessary to make the meaning more clear, *are mentioned in foot-notes* (twenty-three in number) *signed with the editor's initials, and the whole, if gathered together, would not fill one printed page!* The book is Lesquereux's own, and the criticism therefore becomes one of the author, not of the editor.

But let us examine some of the so-called editorial blunders. There are, we are informed, "incorrect citations." As only high ecclesiastics lay claim to infallibility, it is not perhaps remarkable that out of nearly a thousand bibliographic references, including page, plate and figure, a few errors should creep in, but it would have been more satisfactory had some of them, or at least one, been pointed out! "The plates . . . are poorly arranged." The plates are divided into three series, the first embracing forty-five plates, the second nineteen plates, and the third three plates, and the figures are arranged upon them (of course in three series) as nearly in systematic order as the size and character of the drawings will permit. This arrangement was fixed by the author before the editor assumed charge, for as stated in the editor's preface, the book was completed once, and sent to Washington, but before it could be taken up for publication a great amount of new material was discovered in Kansas, and Lesquereux asked that the manuscript and plates be returned to him. This new material added 110 new species and twenty-one plates. Lesquereux left figures for nineteen of these plates, and the remaining three were made under the supervision of the editor. The author made hundreds of references and cross-references to the plates as thus arranged. To have changed this arrangement would not only have involved many errors, but was actually impossible, for the tint of the India ink work was not the same on the last series of plates as on the first, and hence they could not have been reproduced by the mechanical processes required at the government printing office, had the two kinds been mixed on the same plate.

"The spelling of names is inconsistent." It is indeed a *gross* typo-

graphical error that we should have both *grossi-* and *grosse-dentatum!* "Often the specific name is in the wrong gender." *Fagus orbiculatum* is wrong in the text, but is correct in the plate, and would have been changed, as were the fifteen subspecies of *Betulites* (p. 61), had it been noticed in time. The species of *Sassafras* pointed out as being in the wrong gender, were first printed by Saporta and Heer in this form, and have been adopted in most European works for upwards of twenty-five years. It was not assumed to be the function of an editor of a posthumous work to make corrections of this character, notwithstanding the fact that the reviewer says: ". . . there are many things that are admissible in a manuscript, written as the thought first comes to us, and pleasing for a time to the fancy, which should be omitted in print!" (It is a matter of great regret that no general rule for the application of this principle was laid down for the guidance of future editors.)

"Misleading phrases; e. g.: 'dots like the impression of basilar points of hairs.'" Basilar parts of hairs would have perhaps been better, but the phrase is not misleading as it stands, for when a leaf covered with a firm pubescence becomes fossilized, the impression bears the imprint of the bases of the hairs on which they appear like dots, as stated by Lesquereux. Again, the expression "A bunch of small pediceled seeds like a *Carex*" is general and popular rather than misleading, for every one knows that technically the fruit of *Carex* is an achene (the fruit of *Citrus Aurantium* is a superior polycarpellary syncarpous plurilocular berry, yet some people still call them oranges!), which is often called, and for all popular and practical purposes is a seed. The resemblance of the fossil under discussion to a bunch of the fruits of *Carex* is clear enough.

"Furthermore, there is a too indiscriminate use of terms, e. g., basal basilar and basil." The first two words are of course synonymous and correctly employed, while the other (basil) is another one of those unfortunate typographical errors which the reviewer has so kindly pointed out! It should be *basal*. The quotation under *Protophyllum denticulatum* is garbled and misleading as quoted, but is self-explaining when presented in full. Following is the complete text (p. 193) the italicised words representing the parts taken: "Leaf coriaceous, round or reniform, enlarged on the sides, truncate at the base, minutely but sharply denticulate all around except at the base, petioled; median nerve thick, percurrent; lateral primaries supra-basilar, very open, the upper branched outside, the lower simple, thin, at right angles to the midrib; secondaries four pairs, subopposite, more or less branching, craspedodrome with their divisions; nervilles at right angles to the secondaries, distinct, simple or forked."

"On page ninety-two we learn that 'the nerves are attached to each other.'" There is no such expression on this page or anything that can be distorted into it. The statement that there is but one species of *Diospyros* in North America is of course not quite true, for there is another relatively unimportant species (*D. Texana*) in southern Texas. The claim that there are illustrations not named is not supported by facts, and that "there are others not numbered" is true in only one case, plate XXI fig. 1, which is instantly restored, by people of ordinary intelligence, by exclusion.

Thus the array of *so-called* editorial blunders seem to resolve themselves into a few simple typographical errors, which every one who has anything to do with printing, must know how difficult it is to keep out of a work of this magnitude (400 pages, sixty-six plates), and while the general public may be able to "readily observe the wide gap between the genial and elegant work of Lesquereux and the lack of care and taste in the present edition," the editor earnestly begs them to look in the book for themselves, and throws himself upon their mercy.— F. H. KNOWLTON, *Washington, D. C.*

NEWS AND NOTES.

AT ITS LAST anniversary meeting the Royal Society awarded the Darwin Medal to Sir Joseph Hooker.

DR. G. VON LAGERHEIM has resigned his position in Quito, Ecuador, and gone to Tromsö, Norway, which is his present address.

AS WE GO to press word has been received of the death of Mr. I. C. Martindale, of Camden, N. J. His botanical specimens are known in many collections, and his own herbarium is one of the largest private collections in this country, and was always in most exemplary order.

MR. FRANCIS DARWIN, son of the great naturalist, and the joint author of *The Power of Movement in Plants*, at present Reader in Botany at Cambridge, has, on the nomination of Professor Babington, been appointed Deputy Professor for the current academical year.— *Gard. Chron.*

"THE COLLECTION of cycadeous plants in cultivation at Kew stands unrivalled, both in regard to the number of species represented, and the size of the specimens generally." This sentence introduces a very interesting account of the Kew Cycads, to be found in *Gardeners' Chronicle* (Oct. 22).

A NEW MONTHLY JOURNAL of botany is promised to make its appearance this month. It will be under the direction of members of the Botanical Department of the University of California, and under the editorial charge of Mr. Willis L. Jepson. Its name is to be *Erythea*, and its price \$1.50.

THE SIMULTANEOUS publication in the *GAZETTE* and the *American Naturalist* of Dr. G. W. Martin's paper on the development of the flowers and embryo-sac in *Aster* and *Solidago* was entirely unexpected by the editors of either journal. The author sent a copy to each without notice of the duplication, and by accident the article appeared in the same issues of both magazines.

M. CASIMIR DE CANDOLLE has repeated (more elaborately) Sachs' experiments upon the flowering of plants under the influence of the ultra-violet rays. It will be remembered that Sachs considered these rays indispensable to the formation of flowers. DeCandolle finds them to be favorable rather than indispensable, and the question still remains unanswered how the rays act.